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U.S. FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES IN EGYPT

~~The overriding U.S. foreign~~ policy objective in the Middle East is the achievement of a comprehensive peace. Over the longer term, U.S. policy aims at a satisfactory evolution of political and economic relations between all countries in the region.

Given its strategic location, size and historical importance, Egypt is critical to achieving this objective. It contains a major portion of the population of the Arab World. Its relations with other Arab countries heavily influence the stability of the area and access to vital oil supplies. Egypt's voice carries weight in Arab and Third World forums. Finally, Egypt offers a potential market for U.S. exports, services, and investment.

The United States supports the continuation in Egypt of a moderate domestic political and economic orientation. Such an orientation is consistent with both specific U.S. diplomatic objectives related to the peace process and the more general U.S. interest in human rights--encompassing not only political rights but also the basic human needs of food, shelter, schooling, and medical care.

For its part, the Egyptian Government seeks a peaceful resolution of Middle East differences and an end to the state of tension which has so distorted the use of resources throughout the region. Equally, the Egyptian people seek an amelioration in their economic circumstances which have badly deteriorated in recent years--in part because of regional conflict. Clearly the Egyptian Government believes that economic betterment is a key part of the peace process.

The present environment in Egypt is consistent with these mutual objectives.

-- Under the leadership of President Sadat, Egypt has made major and continuing progress in the direction of full political liberalization.

-- The Egyptian political leadership gives priority to a peaceful resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

-- The Egyptian Government seeks to accelerate domestic economic and social development within the context of a relatively stable domestic political environment that is developing the flexibility to adapt to changing needs.

-- Egypt has played and continues to play, a moderate and constructive role in the Middle East peace effort. The historic and courageous visit to Jerusalem by President Sadat has created a new dimension to the peace effort which must be supported.

-- Egypt occupies a position of great strategic importance between the Middle East and Africa. Areas of cooperation and mutual interest between Egypt and the United States in these increasingly important regions should increase substantially in the next few years.

Source: Adapted from "Report of a Special Interagency Task Force on U.S. Economic Assistance to Egypt in Response to Section 9 of the International Security Assistance Act of 1977".

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